

College Athlete NIL Litigation, Case No. 4:20-cv-03919

Dear Judge Wilken,

My name is Barton Mixon, a high school senior whose 12-year journey toward Division I football has been abruptly derailed by the proposed roster limits. I write to share how these limits have crushed a dream built on countless sacrifices and unwavering dedication.

At six years old, I first laced up cleats on a muddy field in my hometown, my father kneeling beside me to adjust my oversized helmet. That moment began a father-son bond forged through football—my dad transitioning from father to coach, mentor, and my greatest believer. While other kids played video games, we studied film. While families took vacations, we drove to football camps across the country.

I worked twice as hard in the classroom, staying up late after exhausting practices because I understood that academics were my pathway to a roster spot. I wasn't the five-star recruit who commanded scholarships, but coaches recognized my work ethic, determination, and football IQ. After years of sacrifice, several Division I programs reached out to my high school coaches and expressed interest in offering me preferred walk-on positions—opportunities I had earned through sweat equity and perseverance.

Then came the announcement about roster limits. One by one, coaches called with voices heavy with regret. "We have to prioritize scholarship players," they explained. Suddenly, twelve years of sacrifice vanished because of a settlement implementation that gave no consideration to timing or transition. Walk-on spots that had been talked about in good faith were rescinded through no fault of my own or the coaches who believed in me.

I am now committed to Sewanee, a Division III school. While I'm grateful for the opportunity, I cannot help but feel that my dream was stolen not by lack of talent or effort, but by an arbitrary limit implemented without regard for the lives it would affect.

Your Honor, I respectfully ask you to consider a phased implementation of these roster limits. This isn't about rejecting change—it's about implementing it in a way that doesn't punish those of us caught in this transition through no fault of our own. My story represents countless others whose years of sacrifice deserve the dignity of a thoughtful transition plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Barton Mixon NCAA ECID: 2402224546

